

## INFORMATION REPORT

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SOURCE Palestinian Arab refugee in Beirut who was present when the Mufti expressed the views reported below.

1. The former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husseini, left Beirut for Damascus, Syria, on 4 June 1961, whence he was to proceed to Cairo, Egypt. Before leaving Beirut he told members of the Arab Higher Executive office there that he planned to return to Lebanon after Ramadan, i.e., at the end of July or in August.
2. While in Beirut the Mufti stated that he had talked with Lt. Col. Adib Shishakli, Syrian Chief of Staff, about the recruitment of Palestinian refugees by the Syrian Army. He said that Col. Shishakli agreed to take a few of those, but stated that the Army could not at this time absorb the fifteen thousand men that he--the Mufti--wished to give him. 1
3. The Mufti said that he had discussed with high Syrian officials the matter of actually settling refugees in Syria. He said that they were in agreement that all the refugees could not return to Israel even if the Jews were conquered, because the Jews have to live somewhere and could not be forced into the sea; therefore, some refugees should be settled permanently in Syria. Source states that the Mufti, for undisclosed reasons, showed himself extremely anxious to get the refugees out of Lebanon and into Syria.
4. The Mufti said that the Umma is impotent and will achieve nothing. The Mufti was also outspoken against the Arab League, charging it with being a British-inspired group even weaker than the Umma. He said that it must be completely disregarded by all Palestinians and by enlightened Arabs in general.
5. The Mufti revealed that one of his chief intelligence sources in Lebanon is Muhammad Murr Awdah, who, he said sends him "excellent reports." According to source, this statement by the Mufti angered Amal Ghuri, who is a bitter enemy of Awdah.

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6. The 'Afti asserted that he is opposed to any attempt to resettle the Palestinian refugees abroad, such as in Australia or North or South America, because then they would never return to their homeland. He said that the UAR is considering the possible resettlement of refugees outside the Arab world and that if anything of the sort is attempted he will call on all the refugees to resist it.
7. The 'Afti stated that he was recently approached in Cairo by two "high-ranking" Britishers who wished to know what position he would take in the event of a third world war. He said that he told them that, in view of past British actions, he could not stand with them--that Britain, more than any other power, was responsible for the creation of Israel, and that their interference in Iraq and Jordan had kept the full might of the Arab world from being thrown against the Jews.
8. According to the 'Afti, the two Britishers wished to know what could be done to win his support in case of another world war. He said that he told them that there would have to be a British promise of complete neutrality and non-interference in matters concerning the Jews and the Arabs, and assistance in keeping the United States as well out of Jewish-Arab affairs. He said that he told them that, if Britain and the United States will stay out of it, the Arab world will liquidate Israel, adding that only British connivance in keeping Syria distrustful of Iraq and Jordan has kept the Arab world from already doing the job.
9. The 'Afti stated that he told the two Britishers that Arab intelligence is excellent; the Arabs know what the Jews have, and know that Syria, Iraq, and Egypt (without Jordan) could defeat Israel if the British and the Americans would adopt a hands-off policy. The United States, he told them, would stay out if the British asked them to. That, he told them, was his price for cooperation in World War III.
10. The 'Afti told members of the Arab High Executive in Beirut that the Pakistani Government is trying to get a pledge of British non-interference in Jewish-Arab affairs.
11. Washington Comment. Source reported on 25 May 1961 that the Grand 'Afti had presented a request to the Arab League meeting in Damascus that a Palestinian refugee army be formed which would be financed by money collected throughout the Arab world. According to the 'Afti's plan, a part of the army was to be trained by Syrian officers and placed under the command of the Syrian Army; the other part would be formed in Gaza and would be placed under the Egyptian Army.